

# The city of Valletta in an eighteenth century map realized by Sebastiano Ittar.

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In this paper a virtually unknown cartographic representation will be analyzed: the planimetry of Valletta, which was realized in the late eighteenth century by the architect Sebastiano Ittar. Through the analysis of this map, the paper aims at reconstructing not only the cartographic techniques but also the representation and interpretation of the urban area: the map may serve to reconstruct the knowhow of a late eighteenth - early nineteenth century professional cartographer and the complex relationships between space and urban society. To date very little research activity about the architect and his works has been conducted<sup>1</sup>; the planimetry of Valletta, however, has been the subject of short essays by Albert Ganado<sup>2</sup> and Giuseppe Dato<sup>3</sup>.

Sebastiano Ittar was born in Catania in 1768. He was the son of Stefano Ittar<sup>4</sup>, an architect operating in Sicily and, since the second half of the 1700's, in Malta where in 1783 the Grand Master of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem commissioned him to construct the new Library of Valletta<sup>5</sup>. After his father's death (Jan 8<sup>th</sup> 1790), Sebastiano continued to attend to the construction of the new Library<sup>6</sup> up to its conclusion, as it emerges from payment notes from April of the same year up to 1795. After June 1798, when Malta was invaded by Napoleonic troops heading to Egypt, Sebastiano and his father's family were still on the island, but he soon fled to escape from the unrest and went to Rome where he studied architecture. Here, in 1799, he met Giovan Battista Lusieri<sup>7</sup>, an artist and a painter at the King of Naples's court, whom was hired by the English ambassador in Constantinople Thomas Bruce, Earl of Elgin, in order to indentify and study classic antiquities during an expedition in Greece.

After the Greek experience and a brief stop in Malta, Sebastiano went back to Catania in 1804, where he focused his activity on the study and cataloguing of local ancient monuments, besides of working on maps of the local towns and surrounding territories. As a result of his work, in 1816, he issued the *Raccolta degli antichi edifici di Catania rilevati e disegnati da Sebastiano Ittar*<sup>8</sup>, and a collection of incisions of landscapes of Mount Etna, a total of twenty-five, published in *Viaggio pittorico all'Etna – contenente le vedute più interessanti di questo Monte e gli Oggetti più rimarchevoli che nelle sue Regioni esistono*<sup>9</sup>. A few years later, in 1806, Sebastiano started topographic measurements of the city of Catania, in order to

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<sup>1</sup> About Sebastiano Ittar see also the recent work of F. Buscemi, *L'Atene antica di Sebastiano Ittar. un architetto di Lord Elgin tra Sicilia, Malta e Grecia*, Palermo 2008, and the pertinent bibliography.

<sup>2</sup> A. Ganado, *The funeral of Angelo Emo in Malta in 1792: a pictorial record*, in «Proceedings of History Week 1982», La Valletta 1993, pp. 151-180.

<sup>3</sup> G. Dato, *La formazione della cartografia moderna: il rilievo di Malta di Sebastiano Ittar*, in G. Pagnano, *Dal tardobarocco ai neostili, atti della giornata di studio Catania 14 novembre 1997*, Sicania, Messina 2000, pp. 155-166.

<sup>4</sup> About Stefano Ittar see also the pertinent entry in *Dizionario Bibliografico degli Italiani*, vol. 62, Roma 2004, pp. 685-687, (by M. G. D'Amelio).

<sup>5</sup> A. Ganado, *The funeral of Angelo Emo* cit., p. 169.

<sup>6</sup> B. Azzaro, *La chiesa di San Martino dei Bianchi in Catania*, in «Palladio», VIII, 1995, n°15, p. 72.

<sup>7</sup> See also. F. Spirito, *Lusieri*, Electra Napoli, Napoli 2003.

<sup>8</sup> S. Ittar, *Raccolta degli antichi edifici di Catania, rilevati e disegnati da Sebastiano Ittar*, Catania 1816

<sup>9</sup> S. Ittar, *Viaggio pittorico all'Etna*, Catania 1830 ca.

make up a map of the urban area and its outskirts. The map was first presented to the Decurionato of Catania (a public assembly of the province) in 1824 or thereabouts, later improved (1829) and finally carved in Paris in 1832<sup>10</sup>. Back from Paris, the civic administration of Catania appointed him Municipal Architect on August 28th 1833. With this new appointment, he was actively involved in a series of projects until his death in 1847. The projects he was involved in (most of which left unfinished) were aimed to redistribute, enlarge and improve the urban area of the town<sup>11</sup>.

During his stay in Malta, Sebastiano realized an accurate map of the Harbor and Fortress of Malta (fig. 1) dedicated to the «components of the Executive Directorate of the French Republic». To the best of our present knowledge, there are two existing copies of the above mentioned map: a black and white engraving, kept at the *Cartes et Plans* section of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France<sup>12</sup> and a watercolor copy kept in the Museo Civico of Castello Ursino in Catania<sup>13</sup>.

The map stored in Paris, made with the copper engraving technique and printed with black ink, is 650x420 mm wide. In the center section of the map a topography of the urban area of Valletta is represented, along with Borgo or Vittoriosa, Senglea, Burmola or Cospicua, Floriana and Casal Novo. In the left and right lateral sections, there are some panes containing two legends and six views of the Valletta urban area.

Ittar's map follows the same path of many other eighteenth century maps of the Maltese capital: *Plans des villes forts, chateaux, et autres établissements, de l'Ordre de St. Jean de Hierusalem dans l'isle de Malte depuis l'an 1530, jusqu'à la presente Année 1733*<sup>14</sup>, the *Plan of the city Vallette, capital of the isle of Malta, with all its Fortifications* by Peter Chassereau del 1740, the *Plan général de la ville capitale de Malte dressé sur les Memoires des Grand Officiers de l'Ordre* by Gervais de Palmeus and Jean Lattré (1751), the *Plan des Port et Ville de Malthe* by J. N. Bellin in 1764, the *Plan de Vieilles et Nouvelle Fortifications de Malthe, situées dans l'Isle du Meme Nom* and, finally, the *Pianta delle fortificazioni di Malta* by Francesco Collignon.

According to Dato, the young architect, owing to the privileges granted to his father –who was involved in the construction of the new Library – took benefit of a large collection of maps and prospective views realized by architects and engineers of the Order of St John in over 250 years for the construction of the fortifications<sup>15</sup>.

Ittar's chart is indeed very similar to some of the above mentioned eighteenth century map. In particular, comparing our map with the mentioned *Plan général de la ville capitale de Malte...dédié et présenté... Par Gervais de Palmeus, Ingénieur-Dessinateur-Géographe de S.A.S./ Gravé par J. Lattré* published in Paris on 1751 (fig. 2), it can be noticed that besides the structure and general orientation, the main elements in the map, the marks that make up the fortifications and the plan are almost identical. It can be assumed then that Ittar started from that cartographical model, updating and enriching it in order to make his own representation of Valletta.

The existing differences, which were actually very minimal, concern mostly the countryside: Ittar's Maltese countryside representation is made up of cultivated fields marked by different colors, divided by paths between each field crossed by main roads and secondary ones known as "trazzere". Alongside the cultivated fields, in which the geometrical orientation of the cultivations is also evident, uncultivated land,

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<sup>10</sup> He arrived in Paris in June 1830 and stayed there for about three years supervising, step by step, the engraving realizations of his drawing and, in particular, the one of the map of Catania (P. Militello, *Il ritratto della città: Palermo, Messina e Catania nelle rappresentazioni cartografiche a stampa (XVI – XIX secolo)*, in «Storia Urbana», n°104, 2003, p. 116).

<sup>11</sup> A valuable documentation, mostly unpublished, is archived in the Museo Civico of Castello Ursino in Catania.

<sup>12</sup> Ittar Sebastiano, *Porto e fortezza di Malta*, Paris, undated, engraving on copper, cm 65x42, (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationales de France. Département de Cartes et Plans – GE C 1354).

<sup>13</sup> G. Dato, *La formazione della cartografia moderna* cit., p. 155.

<sup>14</sup> T. Colletta, *Piazzeforti di Napoli e Sicilia. Le «Carte Montemar» e il sistema difensivo meridionale al principio del Settecento*, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, Napoli 1981.

<sup>15</sup> G. Dato, *La formazione della cartografia moderna* cit., p. 155.

rocky hills, streams and valleys are also represented. Another remarkable difference in the bottom – right section of the chart is the topography of the coastal territory of the Dragut Point, Siliema (*Punta detta di Dragutto della Siliema*). Ittar had to redraw the section for he had to add the plan of Tigne' Fort, built in 1792. From a planimetric standpoint, the only differences that can be marked relate to the updates Ittar made regarding the residential area with increased number of blocks in the urban area of Floriana (*Borgo Vileña*), while the towns of Vittoriosa, Senglea and Cospicua remain unchanged. Another important aspect which adds a new perspective on Maltese settlement is the representation of the small village of Casal Novo<sup>16</sup>. Being inside the area chosen by Ittar for his map, the small compound is represented in detail, with the same care and attention Ittar gave to the cities.

While the central picture of the chart shows in detail the planimetries of the urban areas, the massive fortifications, the creeks and the harbors – therefore underlining the strategic-military aspect of the island – the six views put in evidence the urban and civil dimension of the capital city. Inside those views, “persons” are always depicted in different scenes: at work, on the coast of Senglea, in the *Veduta del Arsenale delle Galere* (fig. 3), following an impressive religious march in the *Veduta della chiesa di S. Giovanni* (fig. 4), in commercial activities while beholding the two galleys of the Order in the *Veduta del Arsenale dei Vascelli* (fig. 5), in a local festival in the *Piazza avanti il palazzo Magistrale* (fig. 6) and finally people pictured while walking in the small square where the new Library in the *Piazza detta de Cavalieri* (fig. 7), amid shops or in a coach across the main streets of the capital in the *Veduta del palazzo del Tribunale* (fig. 8).

Looking up in the *Catalogo della Biblioteca del Sagro Ordine di San Giovanni Gerosolimitano*<sup>17</sup>, issued in 1781, in the *Classe III* dedicated to the *Carte topografiche e vari prospetti dell'Isola di Malta*, we find that the French map from which Ittar took inspiration (according to our hypothesis) was already present in Malta. Moreover, after 1790, Sebastiano continued the construction of the new library: Sebastiano himself negotiated and assisted the arrival of the huge number of volumes – amounting to over 22.000 volumes<sup>18</sup> in 1776 – in the new site. Considering that Ittar started to study drawing and architecture<sup>19</sup> with great passion at a young age, we can fairly assume that he took every care to consult the precious documents available in the library of the Order.

Although very similar to the French map of 1751 not just in structure and orientation, by adding an updated planimetry and some views of the island, Ittar's map offers a stylistically new and scientifically valid product for Malta of that time. His planimetry, in fact, will serve as a model for some of the following most famous 1800's maps, like that of Valletta by William Henry Smyth in 1823.

Unfortunately we do not have direct information on the procedures utilized by Ittar in order to update the urban planimetry. However, it can be of help to give a look at the drawings produced by Ittar to take record of the Greek monuments, unpublished draft, archived in the Museo Civico of Castello Ursino in Catania<sup>20</sup>: from here it is possible to speculate on the techniques Ittar used to realize the planimetry. In particular the sketch of the *Map of Micene* (fig. 9) shows the technique Ittar used in order to create a perfect system of triangular meshes for the planimetry of the urban area. Besides the technical aspects, the map is also interesting from an historical point of view. It allows to reconstruct the process of representing the Maltese urban identity during the French occupation. Recent studies (from Cesare De Seta to Brigitte Marin and, for

<sup>16</sup> Casal Novo (Paola) founded in 1626 by the Grand Master Antonie de Paule, more modern than all other villages, presents chessboard-like urban plan (G. F. Abela, *Malta illustrata. Della descrizione di Malta, isola nel Mare Siciliano, con le sue antichità, ed altre notizie*, Bonacota, Malta 1647).

<sup>17</sup> P. F. De Smitmer, *Catalogo della biblioteca del Sagro Militar Ordine di S. Giovanni Gerosolimitano oggi detto di Malta compilato da Fra Francesco Paolo de Smitmer...*, 1781, p. 201.

<sup>18</sup> B. Azzaro, *La chiesa di San Martino* cit., p. 68.

<sup>19</sup> V. Librando, N. Sciaavello e S. Nicolsi, *Sebastiano Ittar, incisore catanese (1778-1847)*, Istituto per la Cultura e l'Arte, Catania 1987, p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> For this I wish to thank Dr. Anna Quartarone, head of the Museum, who kindly allowed me to consult and photograph part of the *Fondo Sebastiano Ittar*.

Sicily and Malta, Enrico Iachello, Albert Ganado and Paolo Militello, just to mention some of them<sup>21</sup>) showed how historic cartography – as well as planimetric cartography – can be a tool to create a urban identity. To better understand the use and practice of the maps, it is necessary to investigate the external stimulus that generates and explains it with a special consideration for the cartographer's point of view.

A first element of interest from this point of view is the inscription at the center – bottom, just below the title, dedicated to the members of the Directory in charge during the French occupation of the island which lasted until September 5<sup>th</sup> 1800: “*Ai Cittadini Reubell, Creilliard, Barzal, Lareveillier, Lepau, Merlui de Deouxi / Componenti il Direttorio Esecutivo della Repubblica Francese... Sebastiano Ittar direante [...] già libero in segno di riconoscenza offre e dedica*”.

The first of the above mentioned members is Jean François Reubell who was elected member of the French Directory (the body that ruled the French institutions in the last part of the Revolution) from 1795 to 1799, and became its president later, from 1796 to May 16<sup>th</sup> 1799<sup>22</sup>. This particular detail allows us to date the chart when the inscription was written, Malta was in French hands and Reubell occupied the highest rank (he stayed in office until May 1799), which is the reason why he is on top of the list in the inscription. Nonetheless, the work was almost certainly commissioned before the French period and most likely it was commissioned by the knights<sup>23</sup>, as claimed by Dato. This claim is reinforced by the use of Italian – language preferred by the Order – as the language utilized for the inscription, the legends, and in the toponomy<sup>24</sup>. It can be assumed, then, that the planimetry of Valletta commissioned by the Knights was later reused to be dedicated to the new rulers of the island. The reason why the chart was scarcely widespread might be due to the rapid transition from French to British rule over the islands: the inscription dedicated to the French Directory – inappropriate in the new political-military scenario – and the use of the Italian language, are two possible causes that contributed to its disappearance.

Nonetheless, besides giving a detailed representation of the urban area at the end of the 1700's, Ittar's chart makes possible to reconstruct the vision of the capital that local *élites* wanted to give. Ittar's work, which along with the planimetry of the urban areas of the island shows views of the capital, intends also to put in evidence not just the point of view of the cartographer, but also that of the committers (and perhaps of those to whom the chart was dedicated). Moreover, thanks to the care and technical skills applied to the urban centre representation, it is possible to catch the difference between the residential areas of Valletta, Senglea and Casal Novo, made up of straight and orthogonal roads according to a *modern* logic, and that of more ancient towns as Vittoriosa and Cospicua which were not specifically designed, crooked and entangled. The chart exalts not only the fortification layout, but also the urban and civic one. Ittar, in fact, will use the same criteria, the same stylistic setup and the same tools in the *Pianta topografica della città di Catania* (fig. 10), enclosing the map with five views of the city's most beautiful squares. In those squares all the symbols and ornaments of the city are concentrated as well as its most representative powers. It is not to be forgotten that, as Iachello wrote, public squares “constitutes the stage and scenography suitable to the unfolding of the urban life in its most spectacular forms, from civil and religious ceremonies to the local marketplace”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> C. De Seta, *Tra oriente e occidente. Città e iconografia dal XV al XIX secolo*, Electra Napoli, Napoli 2004; B. Marin, *La Mappa Topografica Della Città di Napoli E De' Suoi Contorni (1775) de Giovanni Carafa, duc de Noja: les ambiguïtés politiques d'une entreprise cartographique moderne*, in E. Iachello e B. Salvenimi, *Per un Atlante storico del Mezzogiorno e della Sicilia in età moderna. Omaggio a Bernard Lepetit*, Liguori Editore, Napoli 1998, pp. 187-199; E. Iachello, *La città del vulcano: immagini di Catania*, in M. Aymard e G. Giarrizzo, *Catania. La città, la sua storia*, Sanfilippo Editore, Catania 2007, pp. 19-49; A. Ganado, *Valletta città nuova. A map history (1566-1600)*, Publishers Enterprises Group, Malta 2003; P. Militello, *Ritratti di città in Sicilia e a Malta (XVI-XVII secolo)*, Palermo 2008.

<sup>22</sup> L. Sciout, *Le Directoire*, Librairie de Firmin-Didot et C.<sup>ie</sup>, Paris 1895.

<sup>23</sup> G. Dato, *La formazione della cartografia moderna* cit., pp. 155-157.

<sup>24</sup> G. Brincat, *Malta. Una storia linguistica*, Le Mani, Genova 2003.

<sup>25</sup> E. Iachello, *Immagini della città. Idee della città. Città nella Sicilia (XVIII-XIX secolo)*, Maimone Editore, Catania 2001, p. 99.

The same features and considerations can be observed also in the *Porto e fortezza di Malta*, in which the image of a “military” city is blended with the image of a “capital” city, marked by the drawing of the blocks inside the fortifications and, above all, by the view of the buildings. In the new political scenario, the city is presented not just as a “city-fortress”, but also as a “capital” one which offered important services and where commerce was flourishing<sup>26</sup>. Valletta was not just the fortified city that materialized the borders: it was also a crowded port designated for maritime commerce. Since the second half of the 1600’s<sup>27</sup>, the Mediterranean Sea was divided among several “commercial dominations”, and Malta, a strategic place in the heart of this Sea, was to become a supporting point for the ships along with the Barbary Coast and the Eastern Mediterranean Coast, opening itself to international commerce, especially later in the 1700’s. Ittar’s chart presents itself as an impressive cartographic document, and, at the same time, it is a precious drawing able to render the image and the urban identity of a city in a delicate phase of transition and transformation.

Iachello, in one of his recent short essays, while stressing that the usage of pictures and descriptions is often arguable and controversial on one hand, argued that «the historian seems often wary of using sources belonging to scholars in other disciplines (such as art historians, urbanists, geographers, cartographers), and of defining an approach of his own. In many cases, such sources have been largely underused and the descriptions have been “naively” quoted (or sometimes excessively)»<sup>28</sup>. Bernard Lepetit advised historians to challenge the traditional analysis of cartography history based on the exclusive (and limiting in some cases) connection between reality and representation of it: «un travail de cartographie du passé n’échappe à aucun des caractères ni à des interrogations qui appartiennent au savoir historique. Il pose en particulier toutes celles que pose l’articulation d’un discours d’aujourd’hui avec les pratiques d’hier»<sup>29</sup>.

The mention of cartography needs further explanation. The above mentioned Lepetit stressed indeed that: «en matière de cartographie historique, deux traditions existent: l’une reconstruit a posteriori, à partir de textes ou de statistiques, des distributions spatiales de phénomènes passés (la répartition de population, les limites des zones de culture, le tracé des voies de transport); l’autre reproduit des documents cartographiques anciens, le plus souvent pour en commenter la technique graphique ou pour en fournir une analyse sémiologique»<sup>30</sup>. Therefore, besides the study of the old charts, the recent thematic cartography<sup>31</sup> is also utilized, i.e. representations built through particular procedures and graphic devices that enable us to understand the distributions, the differences and correlations of the evolutive aspects of facts and

<sup>26</sup> A. Brogini, *Malte, frontière de chrétienté (1530-1670)*, École française de Rome, Roma 2006, pp. 333-398.

<sup>27</sup> Ivi, p. 226.

<sup>28</sup> E. Iachello, *La città del vulcano: immagini di Catania*, in M. Aymard e G. Giarrizzo, *Catania. La città, la sua storia*, Domenico Sanfilippo Editore, Catania 2007, p. 19.

<sup>29</sup> B. Lepetit, *Cartes d’aujourd’hui et cartes d’hier*, in E. Iachello e B. Salvemini, *Per un atlante del mezzogiorno e della Sicilia in età moderna. Omaggio a Bernard Lepetit*, Liguori editore, Napoli 1998, pp. 264-272, («a work of cartography of the past does not escape any of the characters or the questions that belong to historical knowledge. In particular, it poses all the questions regarding the modeling, and all those that places the articulation of a speech of today with the practices of yesterday»).

<sup>30</sup> Ivi, p. 267, («in the field of cartography, there are two traditions: one reconstruct retrospectively, from texts or static, from the spatial distribution of spatial phenomena (the distribution of the population, the limits of the areas of culture, the route of transport routes); the other reproduces the oldest cartographic documents, often in order to comment on the graphic technique or to provide a semiological analysis»).

<sup>31</sup> For the reconstruction of the pertinent aspects to the development and approach to thematic cartography, see: C. Cauvin, F. Escobar et A. Serradj, *Cartographie thématique. 1, une nouvelle démarche*, Hermes Lavoisier, Paris 2007; id.. The other volumes all published in Paris by editor Hermes Lavoisier are: *Cartographie thématique. 2, des transformations incontournables*, 2007; *Cartographie thématique. 3, méthodes quantitatives et transformations attributaires*, 2008; *Cartographie thématique. 4, des transformations renouvelées*, 2008; *Cartographie thématique. 5, des voies nouvelles à explorer*, 2008; F. Vergneault-Belmont, *L’œil qui pense: méthodes graphiques pour la recherche en sciences de l’homme*, l’Harmattan, Paris 1998; id., *Lire l’espace penser la carte*, l’Harmattan, Paris 2008. For the semiologic approach see J. Denègre, *Sémiologie et conception cartographique*, Hermes Lavoisier, Paris 2005.

phenomena and of the spatial sets under investigation<sup>32</sup>. Thematic charts then becomes the interpreting tool for an urban historiography<sup>33</sup> (and more) which, while searching new tools to read the urban space, tries to «eliminate the distinction between actors and space, establish relations and routes that enable to read events and protagonists, individuals and social groups in a close relationship with the spatial dimension of the city, its territory, streets, squares, houses, neighborhoods, symbols, territorial hierarchies and social topography»<sup>34</sup>.

As we mentioned before, this precious document provides several details of the urban and geographic aspects of the island through its layout. However it is indeed through the analysis and graphical simplification of its legend that we can draw an inedited picture of the social, commercial, military and administrative fabric of the towns at the end of the 1700's. The planimetry comes with a legend with 46 numeric references divided into five groups, one for each urban area<sup>35</sup>. In these groups there is mention of the doors, churches, public offices and buildings, government buildings and the «Albergi de' Cavalieri» of the Order.

By observing the first graphic rendering (table 1), it appears clear, as De Seta has already wrote, that the eighteenth century is the one where topography emerges as an official science with its own set of reference material, more and more specialized<sup>36</sup>. In this table, besides the simplification of the geographic space, the fortification system is put in evidence too. As Jacques Le Goff pointed out, the fortifications are, at the same time, a technical product as well as a military, economic, social, political, juridical, ideological and symbolic one and establish specific dialectic relations between the *urbs* and the *civitas*<sup>37</sup>; at the end of the eighteenth century, the walls fitted perfectly the different urban areas. As it can be noticed, the fortifications consisted of two separate walls, between which there was what Dato called the «voids system», i.e. the organization of huge specific areas comprised of the two sets of walls, which were strategically used during a siege<sup>38</sup>. The urban space fits perfectly in the first line of walls, outlining also the different layouts of the road system; a regular one, made up of straight roads and orthogonal to each other in Valletta; Senglea's road system was less plain in the house blocks layout, but still well organized; more crooked are those of the Cospicua and Vittoriosa<sup>39</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> J.-J. Bavoux, *Initiation à l'analyse spatiale*, Armand Colin, Paris 2010.

<sup>33</sup> J.-L. Arnaud, *Analyse spatiale, cartographie et histoire urbaine*, Éditions Parenthèses/MMSH, Marseille 2008.

<sup>34</sup> G. Scaglione, *Cartografia dell'assetto urbano catanese nella prima metà dell'Ottocento*, in E. Iachello, *La grande Catania. La nobiltà virtuosa, la borghesia operosa*, Domenico Sanfilippo Editore, Catania 2010, pp. 206-233.

<sup>35</sup> The legend is written as follows, (left side) Borgo S. Angelo o Città Vittoriosa: 1. Porta della Marina; 2. Porta Principale; 3. Chiesa Parrocchiale di S. Lorenzo; 4. Palazzo del General delle Galere; 5. Palazzo del Vice Armiraglio delle Galere; 6. Palazzo de Capitani delle Galere; 7. Arsenale e Costruzione delle Galere; 8. Magazini addetti al servizio delle Galere; 9. Prigione de Schiavi; 10. Piazza detta della Vittoria. Isola o Città Senglea: 11. Porta Principale; 12. Porta della Punta; 13. Palazzo de Capitani delle Galere; 14. Banchine in cui e la Macchina per Malliare i Vascelli; 15. Prigione per gli Schiavi. Burmola o città Cospicua: 16. Porta del Vallone; 17. Piazza d'Armi; 18. Piazza de Viveri; 19. Arserale de Vascelli; 20. Sito per la Costruzion de Vascelli. (right side) Città Valletta: 21. Porta Reale; 22. Porta della Marina; 23. Porta dei Marsamuscetto; 24. Chiesa di S. Giovanni; 25. Palazzo Magistrale; 26. Albergi de Cavalieri; 27. Cancelleria; 28. Camera per la Finanze detta il Tesoro; 29. Conservatoria e Biblioteca; 30. Arsenale detto la Ferrara; 31. Fonderia; 32. Arsenale detto il Fianco; 33. Zecha; 34. Piazza de Viveri; 35. Magazini per il commercio; 36. Dogana; 37. Prigione per gli Schiavi; 38. Ospedale degli Omini; 39. Ospedale delle Donne; 40. Forte S. Elmo; 41. Torri Cavalieri. La Floriana: 42. Porta del Molo, detta del Crocifisso; 43. Porta principale, detta de Cani; 44. Porta detta ta Langias; 45. Ospizio delli Invalidi; 46. Fabrica della Polvere.

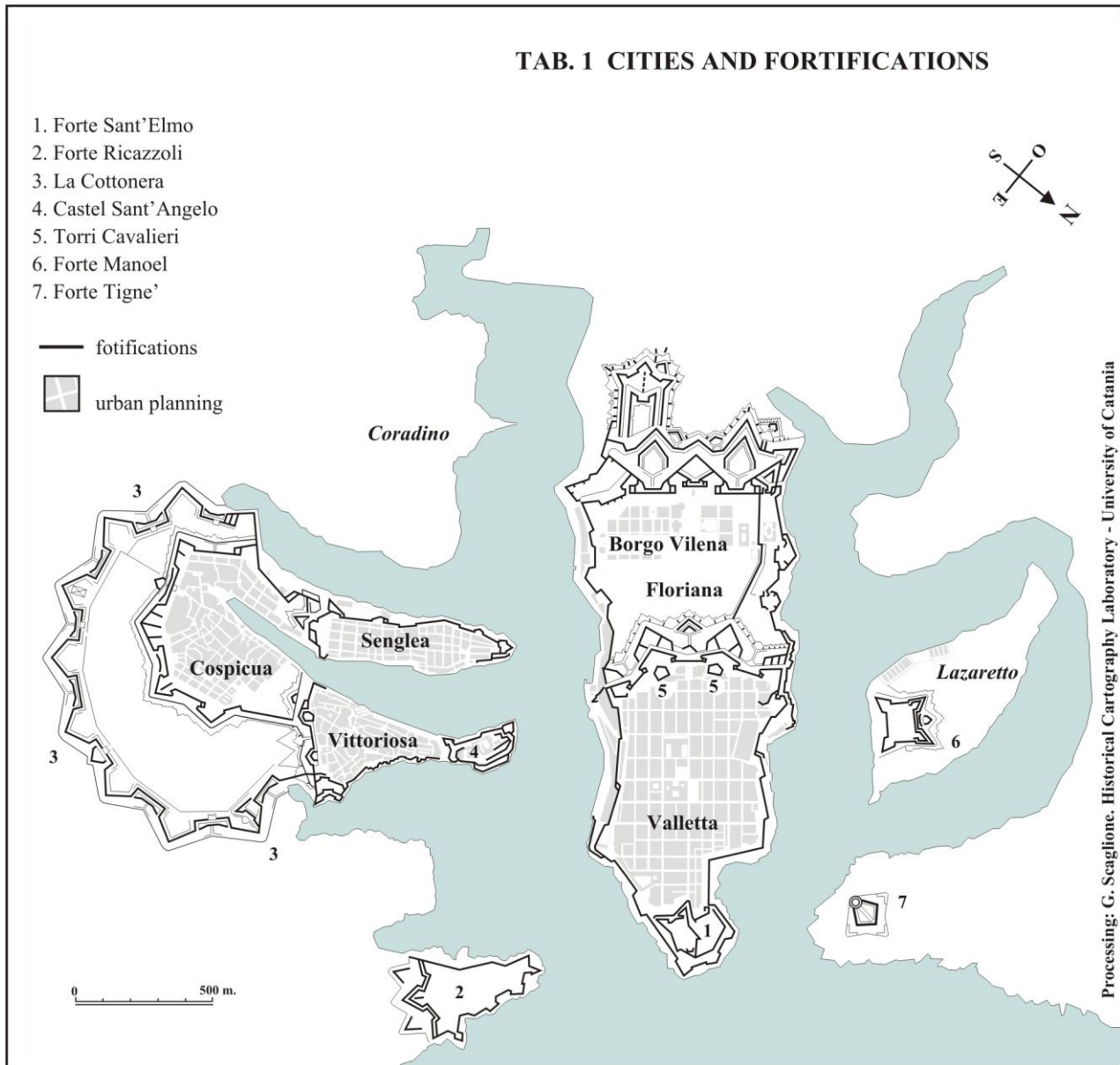
<sup>36</sup> C. De Seta, *L'immagine delle città italiane dal XV al XIX secolo*, Edizioni De Luca, Roma 1998, p. 21.

<sup>37</sup> J. Le Goff, *Costruzione e distruzione della città murata. Un programma di riflessione e ricerca*, in C. De Seta e J. Le Goff (a cura di), *La città e le mura*, Laterza, Bari 1989, pp. 1-10.

<sup>38</sup> G. Dato, *La formazione della cartografia moderna* cit., p. 158.

<sup>39</sup> On the urban structures see, C. Dalli, *Behind the walls, beyond the shores: the urbanization of Malta*, in E. Iachello e P. Militello, *Il Mediterraneo delle città*, Franco Angeli, Milano 2011, pp. 75-88.

Following the path of the defensive lines, situated at the bottom of the chart, designed to protect the access from the sea and where the main towns are all lined up, we have «Forte Ricazzoli» on the East side; on the opposite side there is «Forte Tignè» and in the central part of the map situated on the promontory of the Xiberras peninsula, built also as a defense to the capital itself, there is «Castello di Sant' Angelo» which, along with the fortified compound of «La Cottonera», constitute the core of the defensive system of the towns.



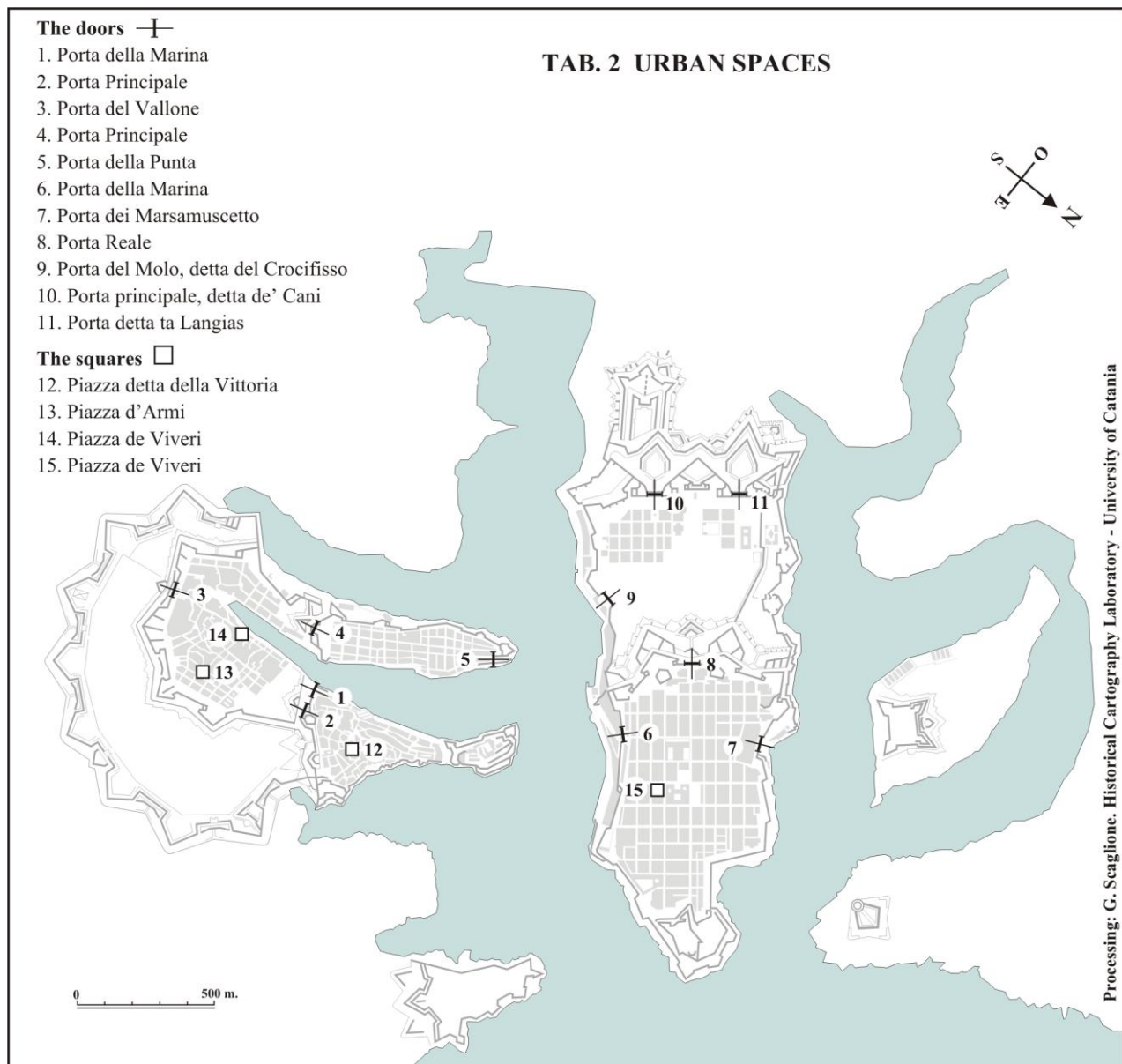
Another fundamental element of the defensive system is the location of the gates. In order to access Valletta there are two main entrances, the «Porta principale, detta de Cani», and the «Porta detta ta Langias». Passed the Borgo Vilena, to access the sea there is the «Porta del Molo, detta del Crocifisso». Going onward, we have to go through the «Porta Reale» to enter the capital and once we are inside there are



two more gates. The first one, named «della Marina», is oriented westward and leans toward the «Gran Porto»; the second gate, known as «Marsamuscetto», faces the same harbor as well.

On the opposite shore, there is the «Porta del Vallone» to access Cospicua and in Senglea, close to the seaside, we see the «Porta della Punta», while on the inner side there is the «Porta Principale». On the other hand in Vittoriosa, we find the «Porta Principale» and the one named «del Vallone» placed next to each other.

Inside the urban area, squares are particularly meaningful. Those mentioned by Ittar in his legend are the «Piazza d'Armi» and «de Viveri» in Cospicua, «Piazza detta della Vittoria» in Vittoriosa and, finally, the one of «de Viveri» in Valletta.



Looking at table 3, we can understand how the main social and commercial public structures were distributed. Almost the totality of those structures were situated in Valletta, with the exception of the «Prigioni degli schiavi» which, as we can see, are also present in Senglea and Vittoriosa.

Through this graphical rendering we can notice how all the different public structures are distributed. It appears clear that the western pier of the capital, where the «Dogana» and all the «Magazzini per il



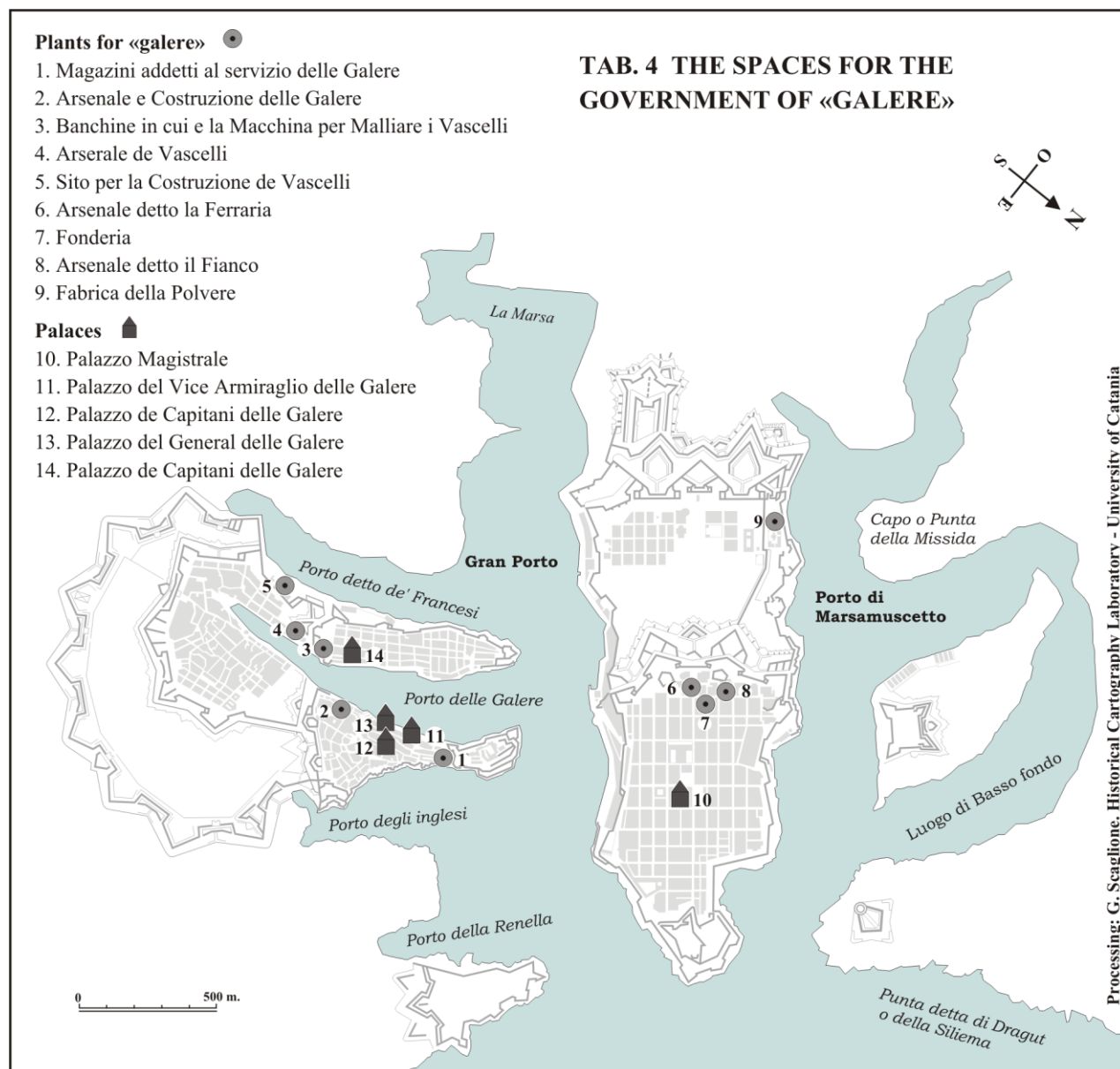
commercio» (custom and commercial warehouses) were located, was the one dedicated to trade activities. There took place all the sanitary control routines and loading, downloading and storage of all goods. On the other hand the public offices related to the State administration were located in the very center of the urban area. The «Conservatoria e Biblioteca», the «Cancelleria», the «Camera per le Finanze detta il Tesoro» and, slightly out of the center, the «Zecha» (state mint).



In table 4 there are the areas dedicated to the maritime activities of which the Order was in charge of for centuries. Looking at the sites of the buildings, dedicated to the major offices of the State and at the compounds where the galley services were held, it can be noticed how the locations of the above sites tends to concentrate toward the towns of Cospicua, Senglea and Vittoriosa, reinforcing the fact that this area was mostly assigned to maritime activities.

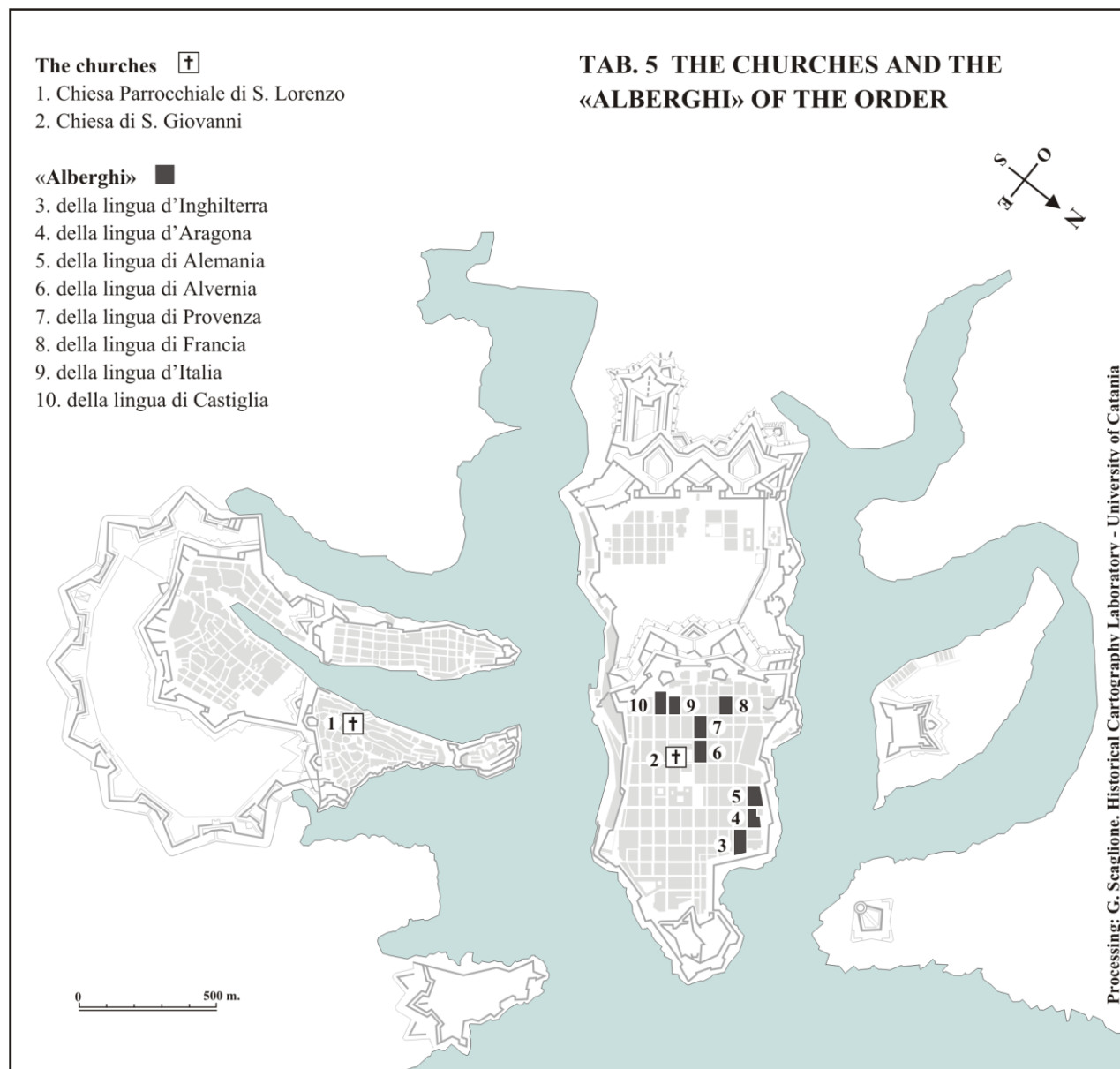
In Vittoriosa there are the palaces «del Vice Armiraglio delle Galere», «de Capitani delle Galere» and «del General delle Galere»; in Senglea we find the «Palazzo de Capitani delle Galere» and finally, in the city center of Valletta, there is the «Palazzo Magistrale».

With regard to the compounds assigned to the galley maintenance in the cities of Vittoriosa, Senglea and Cospicua, there are the «Magazini addetti al servizio delle Galere», the «Banchine in cui e' la Macchina per Malliare i Vascelli», the «Sito per la Costruzione de Vascelli» and the arsenals for the «Costruzione delle Galere» and «de Vascelli». On the opposite side, inside the defense walls, there is the «Fabrica della Polvere» in Floriana and the «Fonderia» and arsenals of «Ferraria» and of «il Fianco» in Valletta.



In this last chart, besides the houses of the Knights of the Order, also the churches are displayed (table. 5). Only two churches are mentioned in Ittar's map legend: the church of «San Lorenzo» in Vittoriosa and the cathedral of «San Giovanni» located in the center of Valletta.

The «alberghi» or residences where the Knights used to live, were divided according to languages. The member of the Order were assigned to each house according to their origin (Alvernia, Provence, France, Aragona, Castiglia, Germany, Italy and England). All those buildings, as we can see, are located inside the Valletta walls<sup>40</sup>.



<sup>40</sup> In Ittar's legend the numeric reference inside the main chart does not specify the housing in relation to a Language, but it points to the general position of the «Alberghi». For the correspondence of the Language to the respective sites see D. De Lucca, *Giovanni Battista Vertova*, Midsea books, Valletta 2001.

Through the analysis of those “derivative” pictures, the aspect that emerges is that of fortified towns, encompassed by monumental fortifications on the inland and unbreakable bastions on the maritime side. The gates system is closely connected to the urban road network and everything leads to the main squares where the major palaces and the most important churches are located. Along with that picture there is also the representation of Valletta where all the main social and economic public offices can be found, along with the residences of the Order’s members from all over Europe. On the other side there are the cities of Vittoriosa, Senglea and Cospicua, where all the activities connected to the maintenance of the galleys took place, activities that were of primary importance to the Order of Jerusalem. Looking through various organizational levels, military and social ones, pictured by the different drawings, a whole set of urban compounds emerges, each of those characterized by its own identity and all linked together by urban functions and administrative structures, thus creating a large and unique system.

### **Plates [following]**

Fig. 1 - Sebastiano Ittar, *Porto e fortezza di Malta*, Paris, undated, engraving on copper, cm 65x42 (Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale de France).

Fig. 2 - Gervais de Palmeus - Jaen Lattrè, *Plan général de la ville capitale de Malte dressé sur les Memoires des Grand Officiers de l’Ordre*, Paris 1751 (Albert Ganado private collection).

Fig. 3 - [particular, *Veduta del Arsenale delle Galere*] in S. Ittar, *Porto e fortezza di Malta* cit.

Fig. 4 - [particular, *Veduta della Chiesa di S. Giovanni*] in S. Ittar, *Porto e fortezza di Malta* cit.

Fig. 5 - [particular, *Veduta del Arsenale de Vascelli*] in S. Ittar, *Porto e fortezza di Malta* cit.

Fig. 6 - [particular, *Piazza avanti il Palazzo Magistrale*] in S. Ittar, *Porto e fortezza di Malta* cit.

Fig. 7 - [particular, *Piazza detta de Cavalieri*] in S. Ittar, *Porto e fortezza di Malta* cit.

Fig. 8 - [particular, *Veduta del Palazzo del Tribunale*] in S. Ittar, *Porto e fortezza di Malta* cit.

Fig. 9 - Sebastiano Ittar, *Map of Micene [Rilievo dell’antica Micene]*, undated, drawing on paper (Museo Civico of Castello Ursino in Catania).

Fig. 10 - Sebastiano Ittar, *Pianta topografica della città di Catania*, Parigi 1832 ca., engraving on copper, cm 78,5x53,4 (Biblioteche Riunite “Civica e Ursino Recupero” in Catania).

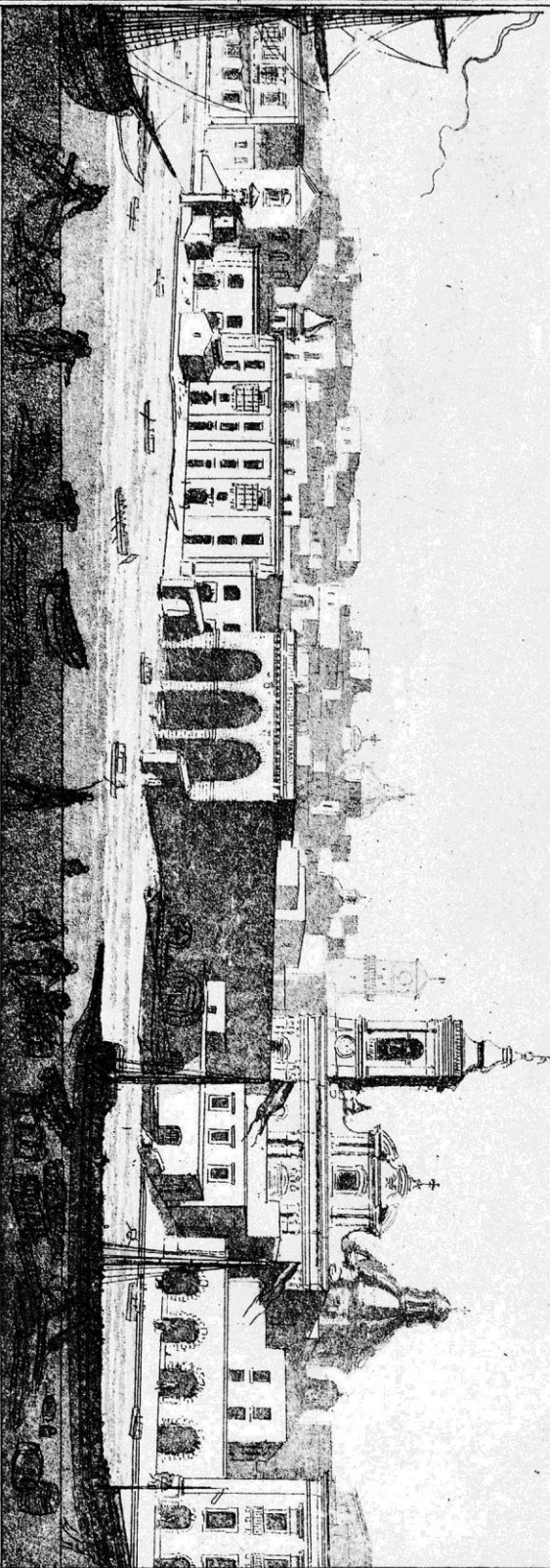




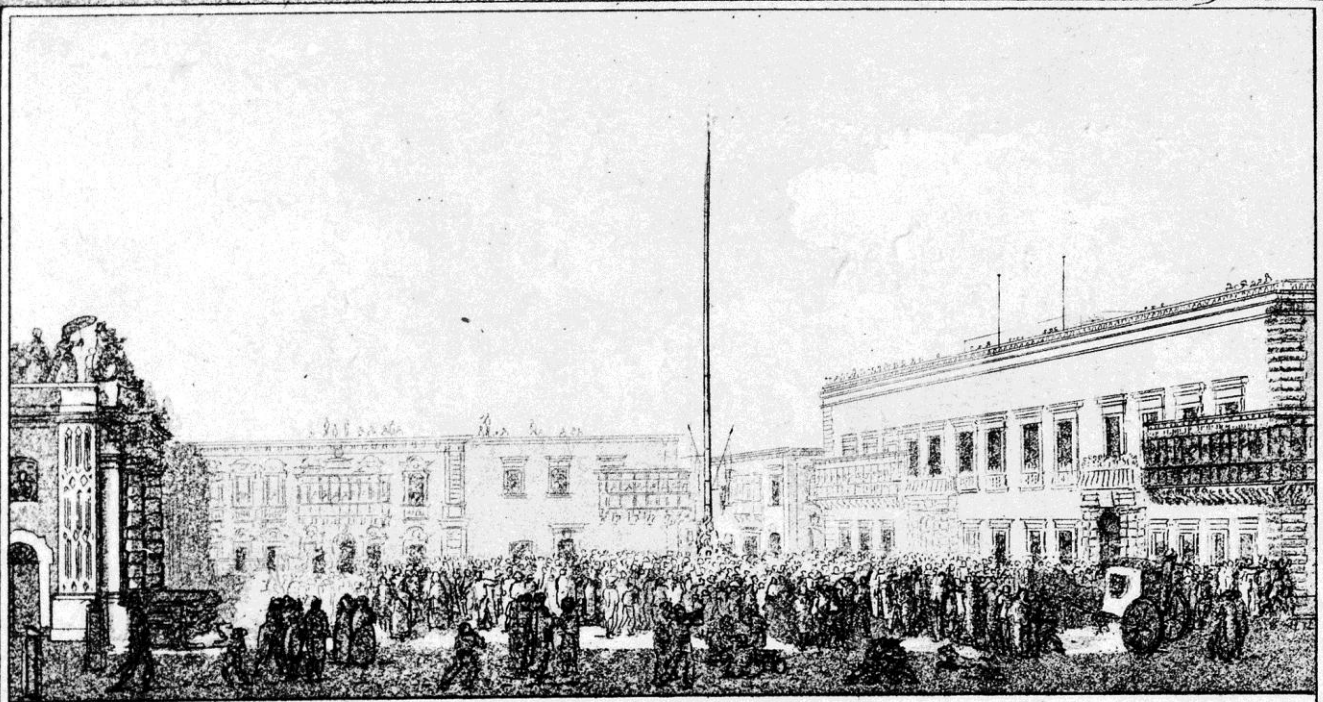




VEDUTA DEL ARSENALE DELLE GALIE



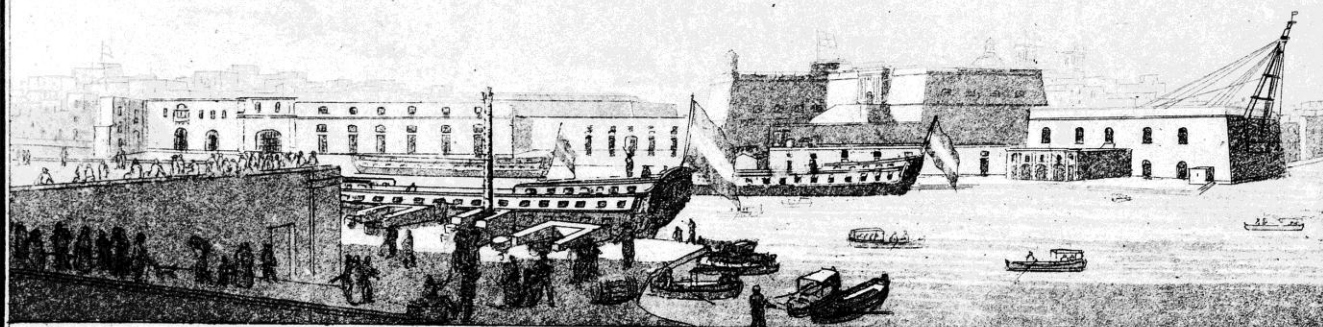




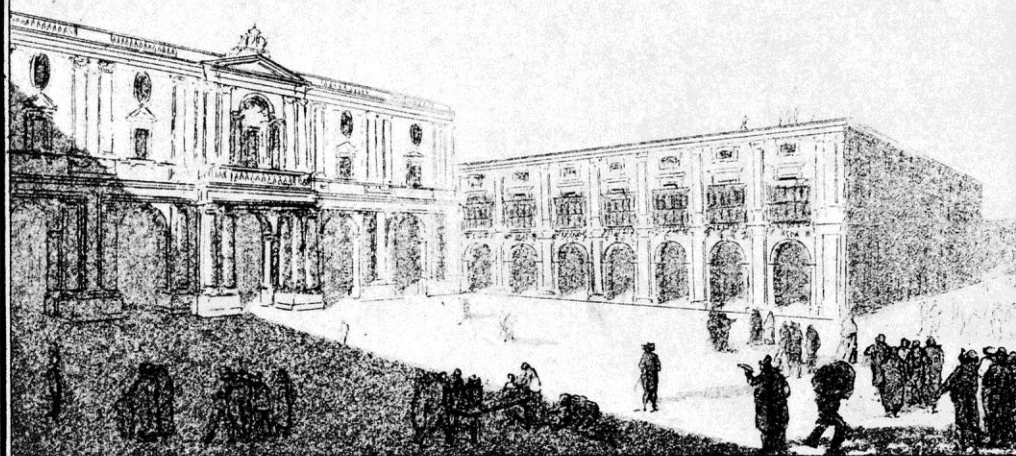
PIAZZA AVANTI IL PALAZZO MAGISTRALE



VEDUTA DELLA CHIESA DI S. GIOVANNI



VEDUTA DEL ARSENALE DE VASCELLI



PIAZZA DETTA DE CAVALIERI









